

SCRIPTURES LOST & FOUND
SPRING 2014

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Class Time: W 1:30–4:00 p.m.
Dates: April 2–23, 2014
Classroom: Bannan 127
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Website: <https://webpages.scu.edu/ftp/cmurphy/courses/olli-scriptures>

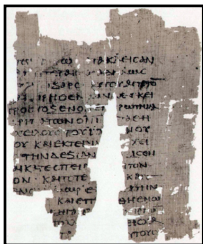
COURSE DESCRIPTION

During the last few centuries, manuscript discoveries have revolutionized our view of early Judaism, early Christianity, and the Bible. From the Dead Sea Scrolls to the gnostic codices of Nag Hammadi, from the Oxrhynchus papyri to the great manuscripts from Egyptian desert monasteries, we now have a wealth of information that challenges our text of the Bible, our notions about the interrelationship of Judaism and Christianity, and our picture of the diversity of early Christianity. This five-week class will explore each of the major manuscript discoveries and what they tell us about religions past and present. Your questions will be an important part of the class as well.

SCHEDULE

APRIL 2

FROM QUILLS TO COMPUTERS



What manuscript discoveries have made the news in recent years? What is “scripture”? What is the Bible? Under what conditions were “biblical” books written? How did they come to be regarded as authoritative? How were they copied, transmitted, used, grouped, edited, translated, and published? What are the major versions of the Bible today, and what is the manuscript evidence on which these versions are based? What books didn’t make it into the Bible, and why? What biblical traditions have been removed from your Bibles, and on what grounds? How is technology being used to analyze and share these manuscripts?

Further Reading

The Actual Texts

Metzger, Bruce M., ed. *The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version with Apocrypha*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991. The most accurate and complete version available today; includes Dead Sea Scrolls and papyri evidence as of 1990.

“New Testament. Virtual Manuscript Room.” *Universität Münster Institut für neutestamentliche Textforschung*. Online, <http://intf.uni-muenster.de/vmr/NTVMR/IndexNTVMR.php>. The University of Münster’s Institute for New Testament Textual Research maintains the official list of papyri and parchment witnesses to the New Testament, with images.

Books About Them

Ehrman, Bart D. and Michael W. Holmes, eds. *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research: Essays on the Status Quaestionis*, New Testament Tools, Studies and Documents 42. Leiden: Brill, 2013.

Parker, D. C. *An Introduction to the New Testament Manuscripts and Their Texts*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008. An excellent and thorough introduction to the physical evidence of the New Testament books and how that evidence is studied. Surprisingly readable.

Tov, Emanuel. *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, rev. ed. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2001. A study of the manuscript evidence for the Hebrew Bible or Old Testament, with special attention to the witness of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

DISCOVERIES IN THE JUDEAN DESERT: THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS



What are the Dead Sea Scrolls? When and where were they found? How many are there? When were they written? What do they tell us about the origins of Judaism and Christianity? Are the versions of biblical books found among the scrolls different from our Bibles? What do these discoveries tell us about the shape of the “Bible” in the time of early Judaism and of Jesus?

Further Reading

The Actual Texts

Abegg, Martin G., Peter Flint and Eugene Ulrich. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible: The Oldest Known Bible Translated for the First Time into English*. New York: HarperOne, 2002. An English translation of the Bible noting every reading found in the biblical scrolls, including variants from modern Bibles.

García Martínez, Florentino. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated: The Qumran Texts in English*, 2d ed., trans. W. G. E. Watson. Boston: Brill, 1997. These are all the other scrolls—that is, the parabiblical, sectarian, sapiential, liturgical, astronomical, and other materials.

“The Leon Levy Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Library.” *Israel Antiquities Authority*. Online, <http://www.deadseascrolls.org.il>. An amazing resource for layperson and scholar alike, this cooperative venture between the Israel Antiquities Authority and Google provides access to both original infrared and contemporary multispectral images of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

“The Digital Dead Sea Scrolls.” *Israel Antiquities Authority*. Online, <http://dss.collections.imj.org.il>. This IAA/Google collaboration is even more user-friendly: five intact Dead Sea Scrolls can be “unrolled” and examined, and English translations pop up as you roll over them!

Books & Web Sites About Them

Davies, Philip R., George J. Brooke and Phillip R. Callaway. *The Complete World of the Dead Sea Scrolls*. London: Thames & Hudson, 2002. A richly illustrated introduction to the discoveries and their significance.

Lim, Timothy. *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A Very Short Introduction*, Very Short Introductions. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006. This Oxford series provides handy, short introductions to many topics.

Magness, Jodi. *The Archaeology of Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2003. A cautious interpretation of the archaeological remains at Qumran by one of the leading archaeologists of the region.

Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Online, <http://orion.mscc.huji.ac.il/>. A rich site oriented to both academic research (with its complete bibliography) and the interested lay person (with its excellent virtual tour of the Qumran site).

Schiffman, Lawrence H. *Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls*, Anchor Bible Reference Library. New York: Anchor Doubleday, 1995. An introduction to the Dead Sea Scrolls by a leading Jewish scholar of the scrolls, this book sets the scrolls in the context of early Judaism rather than in the (more common) interpretive context of early Christianity.

VanderKam, James C. and Peter Flint. *The Meaning of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Their Significance For Understanding the Bible, Judaism, Jesus, and Christianity*. New York: HarperOne, 2004. A popular introduction to the scrolls written by my doctoral advisor, Jim VanderKam, and another former colleague from the University of Notre Dame. Readable, comprehensive, and well-illustrated.



What has been discovered in the old dump at Oxyrhynchus? How long has the dig been going on? Where are these scraps being published? Given its fragmentary nature, what is most significant about this group of finds? What pieces of the Bible have been found, and how were these excerpts used by their original owners? Can we tell anything about Judaism and Christianity from the scraps of manuscripts found here?

Further Reading

The Actual Texts

The Oxyrhynchus Papyri, Graeco-Roman Memoirs. London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1898–. Over 800,000 papyri fragments were found in Oxyrhynchus and nearby areas. Over the past 111 years, seventy two volumes of these fragments have been published, with over thirty left to go.

Books & Web Sites About Them

Major Codices

The Aleppo Codex, <http://aleppocodex.org/>. One of the two most important manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, this 9th century manuscript is older than the other (the Lenin-grad Codex) but less complete. This excellent Web site provides access to the text and wonderful background information on the manuscript.

Codex Sinaiticus, <http://www.codexsinaiticus.org/en/>. Inscribed in the fourth century CE, this Greek copy of the Old and New Testaments is one of the oldest Christian Bibles in the world, and the largest book to have survived antiquity. Another fabulous Web site that lets you explore the manuscript as if it were right in front of you.

Porter, Stanley E. *Constantine Tischendorf: The Life and Work of a 19th Century Bible Hunter*. New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015.

Oxyrhynchus

Bagnall, Roger S. *Early Christian Books in Egypt*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2009. Challenges many of the early conclusions drawn about early Christianity in Egypt on the basis of the papyri. Places book production in its economic context, and argues that the number of early Christian books from the region is fewer than previously thought.

Bowman, K., R. A. Coles, N. Gonis and D. Obbink, eds. *Oxyrhynchus: A City and Its Texts*, Graeco-Roman Memoirs 93. London: Egypt Exploration Society, 2007. A discussion of the archaeological site, along with the papyrus evidence. A complete account of the excavations.

Luijendijk, AnneMarie. *Greetings in the Lord: Early Christians and the Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, Harvard Theological Studies. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2009. An academic study of the evidence of early Christian life and practice in Egypt.

Parsons, Peter. *City of the Sharp-Nosed Fish: The Lives of the Greeks in Roman Egypt*. London: Orion Books, 2007. Oxyrhynchus is unusual in that it yielded thousands of documentary texts—that is, contracts, legal papers, complaints, and other mundane artifacts that help us to reconstruct the lives of ordinary people. That's just what Parsons does in this readable introduction.

"POxy: Oxyrhynchus Online," *Papyrology at Oxford*, Oxford University. Online: <http://www.papyrology.ox.ac.uk/POxy/>. The scholars who discovered the papyrus dump at Oxyrhynchus worked at Oxford University; this Web site provides access to information and exhibits about the discovery and to the publications of the Egypt Exploration Society.

APRIL 23

THE Gnostic CODICES OF NAG HAMMADI



What was discovered at Nag Hammadi in Egypt? What is “Gnosticism” and how is it represented in these books? Why was it considered a heresy by some Christians? Are these books at all like those in the Bible, and has the Bible been changed to reflect these discoveries? What is the role of women in these texts, and is their prominence here part of the reason these books were deemed heretical?

Further Reading

The Actual Texts

Meyer, Marvin, ed. *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures: The Revised and Updated Translation of Sacred Gnostic Texts Complete in One Volume*. New York: HarperOne, 2009.

The Gnostic Society. “The Nag Hammadi Library Alphabetical Index.” *The Gnostic Society Library* (n.d.). Online, <http://www.gnosis.org/naghamm/nhlalpha.html>.

“The Lost Gospel of Judas.” *National Geographic* (2006). Online, <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/lostgospel/index.html>.

Harvard Divinity School. “The Gospel of Jesus’s Wife: A New Coptic Gospel Papyrus.” *Harvard Divinity School: Faculty & Research: Research Projects* (n.d., © 2014). Online, <http://www.hds.harvard.edu/faculty-research/research-projects/the-gospel-of-jesus-wife>.

Books About Them

Ehrman, Bart D. *Truth and Fiction in The Da Vinci Code*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Pagels, Elaine and Karen L. King. *The Gospel of Judas and the Shaping of Christianity*. New York: Viking, 2007.

Further reading on other apocryphal books that didn’t make it into the Bible

The Actual Texts

Charlesworth, James H. *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1983.

Miller, Robert J., ed. *The Complete Gospels: Annotated Scholars Version*. Sonoma, California: Polebridge, 1995.

“Noncanonical Literature.” *Wesley Center Online*. Online, http://wesley.nnu.edu/biblical_studies/noncanon/.

Schneemelcher, Wilhelm ed. *New Testament Apocrypha*, trans. R. McL. Wilson, 2 vols. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006.

Books About Them

Ehrman, Bart D. *Misquoting Jesus: The Story Behind Who Changed the Bible and Why*. New York: HarperOne, 2005.

Foster, Paul. *The Apocryphal Gospels: A Very Short Introduction*, Very Short Introductions. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.